

# IOWA STATE PARK RESERVATION INFORMATION

## Synopsis of Rules

**Web Address:** [www.reserveiaparks.com](http://www.reserveiaparks.com)

**Reservation Phone #:** 1-877-IAPARKS  
(1-877-427-2757)

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## **A. GENERAL CAMPING RULES**

### **1. Check-in/Check-Out – Reservable Sites**

4:00 p.m. – check-in

3:00 p.m. – check-out

Walk-in campers may not occupy unrented reservable sites before 10:00 a.m. on the first day of their stay. This is to allow staff an opportunity to get the reservation registration cards posted to help avoid walk-ins having to move because of an incoming reservation for the weekend.

### **Check-in/Check-Out – First-Come, First-Serve Sites**

4:00 p.m. – stays the same

### **2. Equipment Capacity (# of overnight units on a site)**

One camping unit and one non-sleeping mode of transportation are allowed per site.

A small tent no bigger than 8' x 10' may also be allowed on a campsite for dependent children under the age of 18 who are immediate family members of the registered camper. The maximum occupancy for the tent is 4.

Some campgrounds may allow a second vehicle to be parked at the campsite and will be posted at the campground.

### **3. Campsite Capacity (# of people on a site)**

6 people on a campsite with one camping unit

Exceptions: If a family exceeds 6 (ie: grandparents, parents, children), they will not be split up but the equipment capacity applies

### **4. Chaperoned Organized Youth Group Campsites - \$15/night**

These sites are reservable and for chaperoned organized youth groups only.

Groups may use other nondesignated campsites but must pay the regular camping fee and follow all rules pertaining to the campsite.

### **5. Extra Vehicles**

Each park determined whether or not their campground would allow for an extra vehicle to be parked at the campsite. This information is available on the campsite information on the reservation system and it will be posted at each campground.

### **6. Peak Season/Off-Season Fees**

Peak Season – May 1 – September 30

Off Season – October 1 – April 30

#### Modern Campgrounds (Examples)

Peak Season -- \$16/night electric; \$11/night non-electric

Off Season -- \$11/night electric; \$6/night non-electric

Off Season – Parks w/heated shower bldgs -- \$13/night electric; \$8/night non-electric

### Nonmodern Campgrounds (Examples)

Peak Season -- \$14/night electric; \$9/night non-electric

Off Season -- \$11/night electric; \$6/night non-electric

\*Additional fees such as water/sewer hook-up, cable television hook-up and equestrian fees remain the same and should applied to both seasons as applicable.

#### **6. Reservable Site Designation**

50% sites reservable; 50% sites first-come, first-serve only

Combination of electric, non-electric, full hook-up, lakeshore, etc.

All staffed parks AND state forest campgrounds (exceptions AA Call, Ft. Defiance, Prep Canyon)

## **B. RESERVATION METHODS**

### **1. Internet (web) – available 24/7**

**Web Address: [www.reserveiaparks.com](http://www.reserveiaparks.com)**

### **2. Phone-in through call center – located in Manning, Iowa**

**Toll Free Number: 1-877-IAPARKS**

#### **Call Center Hours**

**February 1 – September 30**

9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST M-F

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST Sa/Su

Open Holidays

**October 1 -- January 31**

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST 7 days a week

Open Holidays

## **C. RESERVATION TRANSACTION FEES**

**NOTE: The camping fee or rental fee is due at the time the reservation is made.**

### **1. Reservation Fee**

The reservation fee is a one-time fee paid to make a reservation for a campsite or rental facility regardless of the length of stay. This fee is applied to each campsite or rental facility that is reserved.

Internet (online) Reservations -- \$4 per reservation

Call Center (phone-in) Reservations -- \$6 per reservation

### **2. Credit Card Processing Fee – 3% of total amount due**

A 3% credit card processing fee will apply if paying for a reservation by credit card. This is to cover the cost the credit card companies charge the DNR for doing business with credit cards.

**3. Change Fee - \$5 per reservation**

A fee will apply if a person wishes to change a reservation. The fee will be charged for each reservation (ie: campsite) a customer changes.

**4. Cancellation Fee -- \$5 per reservation**

A fee will apply if a person wishes to cancel a reservation. The fee will be charged for each reservation (ie: campsite) a customer cancels.

**D. PAYING FOR RESERVATIONS**

- 1. Internet Reservations (online)** – credit cards and debit cards backed by Visa or MasterCard – We will not split the payment between two or more credit cards.

Note: We will be phasing in e-checking at a later date

- 2. Call Center Reservations (by phone)** – credit cards, debit cards backed by Visa or MasterCard, checks, money orders, DNR-issued camping coupons

- 3. Checks/Money Orders/Camping Coupons** – Persons wishing to pay with these financial instruments must make their reservation no later than 21 days prior to arrival. This is to allow time for the customer to mail in the payment and for us to send out a confirmation letter. Example: Last day to make a reservation for June 24 is June 3.

Payments must be physically received in the Contractor's office within 10 days from the date the reservation was made.

- 4. Where do customers send their payments?**

**Iowa State Park Reservations  
PO Box 6206  
Des Moines, IA 50309-6206**

Customers should write their confirmation number in the memo section of the check. Multiple checks should be mailed all together to ensure complete payment is made on time.

**E. RESERVATION WINDOW**

**A reservation window is a rolling period of time in which a person may make a reservation for a campsite or rental facility for a specific arrival date.**

- 1. Camping – 3 months (count back 3 months from the arrival date to figure the opening window)**

- Paying by Credit Card/Debit Card - 3 months in advance up to 2 days prior to arrival
- Paying by Check/Money Order/Camping Coupon – 3 months in advance up to 21 days prior to arrival

Note: There are a couple of times when you count back three months and run into a problem. We have made accommodations for this.

May 29, 30, 31 – Opening window will be March 1

July 31 – Opening window will be May 1

**2. Cabins – 12 months**

- Peak Season – 12 months up to 4 days prior to arrival - paying by credit/debit card
- Peak Season – 12 months up to 21 days prior to arrival - paying by check/money order
- Off Season – 12 months up to 14 days prior to arrival date - paying by credit/debit card
- Off Season – 12 months up to 21 days prior to arrival date - paying by check/money order

**3. Window Closing** - when the last day of a reservation window closes, it means a person has until 7:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. (depending upon time of year and day) to make a reservation through the call center or until midnight if reserving through the internet.

**F. CAMPGROUND RESERVATION LIMITATIONS/REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Minimum Stay**

Peak Season (May 1 – September 30) – 2-night stay required for weekend (F/Sa)

**Exception: 3 Major Holidays**

- Memorial Day and Labor Day holiday weekends – 3-night stay required (Friday, Saturday, Sunday)
- 4<sup>TH</sup> of July Holiday – depends upon what day the actual 4<sup>th</sup> of July lands on
  - 4<sup>th</sup> of July on a Thursday, Friday or Saturday – 3 night requirement (Thursday, Friday, Saturday)
  - 4<sup>th</sup> of July on a Monday – 3 night requirement (Friday, Saturday Sunday)
  - 4<sup>th</sup> of July on a Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday – no 3-night requirement (if camper chooses to camp over the weekend – 2-night requirement of Friday/Saturday applies)

Off Season (October 1 – April 30) -- No minimum stay requirement

**2. Maximum Stay – No more than 14 consecutive nights.**

Camper must vacate the entire park/rec area for three nights before they may camp at that park again.

Exception: Lake Manawa and Walnut Woods – Person cannot camp more than 14 nights in any 30-day period.

**3. Number of Campsites A Person Can Reserve in One Phone Call or Internet Session**

Peak Season (May 1 to September 30)

- Unlimited number for stays occurring Sunday –Thursday (except for major holidays)

Exception: Major Holidays

Sunday of Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends  
Thursday when the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is on a Thursday  
Sunday when the 4<sup>th</sup> of July lands on a Sunday or Monday

- Limit of 5 campsites for stays occurring Friday-Saturday\*\*

\*\*OR

- Any portion of a camping stay which encompasses a Sunday or Memorial Day and Labor Day holiday weekends.
- Any portion of a camping stay which encompasses a Sunday when the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday is on a Sunday or Monday.
- Any portion of a camping stay which encompasses a Thursday when the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is on a Thursday.

Off Season (October 1 to April 30)

- Unlimited regardless of the day of the week

#### **4. Number of Camping Trips a Person Can Reserve in One Phone Call or Internet Session**

Unlimited as long as the camping trip falls within the allowable reservation window

### **G. CHANGES TO RESERVATION – Must go Through Call Center**

#### **1. Timeframe**

- The last day to make a change to a camping reservation is 5 days prior to arrival if paying by check/debit card.
- The last day to make a change to a camping reservation is 21 days prior to arrival if paying by check/money order/coupon.
- The last day to make a change to a cabin reservation during the peak season is 30 days prior to arrival.
- The last day to make a change to a cabin reservation during the off season is 14 days prior to arrival if paying by credit/debit card or 21 days prior to arrival if paying by check/money order.

#### **2. Change Fee**

A \$5 change fee will be charged to make a change to a reservation item. The fee will apply for each campsite/cabin which is changed. (Example: Change two cabin reservations = \$10 (2 - \$5 change fees))

Examples of Changes: Change arrival dates (with certain limitations), departure date, entire trip dates, switching from one campsite type to another (will have to pay additional camping fees if upgrading sites)

#### **3. Unacceptable Changes**

Changes from one customer to another including the payment. Changes that result in arrival date being outside the reservation window

#### **4. Changing the Reservation Arrival Date – Camping Only**

A person may not change the arrival date to a subsequent date which is later than the original arrival date. Customer can change arrival date only if it is for additional days earlier than the original arrival date.

#### **5. Extending Stay After Arrival**

Camper may extend up to two camping nights so long as the reservable campsite is available and on a day-by-day basis thereafter unless camper wishes to call and make a reservation.

#### **6. Early Departures**

Depending upon the situation a refund may be given. Customers must contact park or call center within 48 hours of early departure to even be eligible for a refund. A refund request form will need to be completed by customer and verified by park staff. Form is then sent on to district office for final review and approval/disapproval.

Allowable Refunds: Customer has a verified emergency  
Park has failed the customer (after all alternatives exhausted)  
Park emergency (homeland security, acts of God)

No Refunds for: Customer circumstances change (work, fight w/spouse, etc.)  
Individual circumstances beyond park's control (weather, bugs, beach monitoring, trail closures)

### **H. CANCELLATION POLICY OF INITIAL RESERVATION – CAMPING**

**Cancellations should be done by customer through the call center.**

**If the cancellation fee and penalty fees total more than the money that had been collected when the reservation (excluding the reservation fee) was made, the DNR will not attempt to collect additional money.**

- 1. Cancel Up to 2 Days Prior to Arrival Date** -- \$5 cancellation fee applies and no camping fees forfeited. Cancellation fee will be deducted from the original reservation payment.
- 2. Cancel Less than 2 Days to Arrival Date** -- \$5 cancellation fee applies and one night of camping is forfeited.
- 3. Cancel Day of Arrival Without Arriving at Park (done through call center)** - \$5 cancellation fee applies and two nights (current night plus one additional) of camping forfeited.
- 4. Cancel After Reservation Date Without Arriving – No Show** – No refund (some exceptions may apply if verified by DNR)

### **I. ARRIVAL/SWITCHING SITES; FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE ON RESERVABLE SITES**

- 1. Arrival** – if camper arrives before check-in time, there's no guarantee the site will be available before 4:00 p.m.



**Note:** There is no requirement to visibly occupy (other than the reservation registration slip in the post) or physically occupy a campsite which is the same policy for the first-come, first-serve sites.

2. **Switching Campsites after Arrival** – decisions are left to the discretion of the park staff

**Note:** Campers with reservations will not be allowed to switch to a first-come, first-serve site unless they cancel their existing reservation including cancellation fees and penalties and then re-register and pay for a first-come, first-serve site.

3. **Walk-in Camping on Reservable Sites** – Unrented reservable campsites are available for a limited time period for walk-in camping. Walk-ins may not occupy the reservable site before 10:00 a.m. of the first night of their stay.

## **J. REFUNDS**

1. **Nonrefundable fees** – reservation transaction fees and credit processing fees are not refundable.
2. **Refunds for Cancellations Occurring Prior to Arrival and Up to Arrival** – customer will receive refund payment using the same payment method made for original reservation. Park staff does not handle these refunds.
3. **Refunds for Early Departures** – must be approved, completion of refund request form and handled in the district office

## **K. EARLY DEPARTURES – REFUND PROCESS**

- Customer must notify park within 48 hours of departure to even be eligible for an approved refund
- Call center will contact park staff immediately if contacted by customer
- Customer must fill out a refund request form –stop at the park office or mail/fax/e-mail form
- Customer must complete and sign the form and return it to IDNR within 10 business days
- Park staff shall review and comment on the reason for early departure and sign the form
- Form is sent to the district office where supervisor will review the form and decide whether to approve or deny the refund request. All refunds will be processed through district offices.

## **L. "BUDDY" CAMPSITES**

Some buddy sights may be designated as reservable. Campers wishing to reserve a buddy site will be required to reserve both "sides" of a buddy site. If first-come, first-serve campers wish to occupy an unreserved reservable buddy site, he/she may do so and only be required to occupy one side of the buddy site.

## **M. EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUNDS**

Any person may reserve "reservable" campsites in an equestrian area as long as they pay the equestrian fee whether they bring horses or not.

## **N. ADA CAMPSITES**

At least one of the ADA campsites in a park campground should be designated as reservable and are available only for ADA use.

## **O. RESERVATION CONFIRMATIONS**

Customers will receive a written confirmation including customer contact information, reservation information including confirmation number, some park policies, and information regarding cancellations and refunds.

Confirmation letters will be mailed or e-mailed to customers when the reservation was processed at least 10 calendar days (or more) prior to the arrival date. Confirmations will be sent by e-mail or verbally for reservations processed less than 10 calendar days prior to arrival date.

If a reservation is changed, a new confirmation letter will be sent following the methods above with a new confirmation number.

## **P. CANCELLATION POLICY OF INITIAL RESERVATION – CABINS**

- Cancels up to 30 days prior to arrival - \$5 cancellation fee applies and full refund.
- Cancels up 15-29 days prior to arrival - \$5 cancellation fee applies and loss one night's rental
- Cancels less than 15 days up to arrival date - \$5 cancellation fee applies and loss of two night's rental
- Cancels after reservation start date "no shows" – No refund unless approved by DNR

## **Q. CABIN RULE CHANGES**

1. **Seasons:** Peak Season – May 1 to September 30    Off Season – October 1 to April 30
2. **Cabin Damage/Cleaning Deposit** -- A deposit of \$50 is required upon arrival for each cabin. Deposit will be returned upon satisfactory inspection of the cabin once the renter checks-out.
3. **Minimum Stay**
  - Camping cabins, yurts, basic cabins – 2 nights year-round
  - Deluxe, modern, studio cabins – 1 week beginning the Friday of the national Memorial Day holiday weekend through the week of the national Labor Day holiday
  - Deluxe, modern, studio cabins – 2 nights beginning the Friday after the national Labor Day holiday through Thursday of the week before the national Memorial Day weekend
4. **Cabin Rental Week** is now Friday to Friday